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ACTIVITIES FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION

International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

Report of the Secretary-General of the Conference

Addendum

Activities of bodies of the United Nations system and other international organizations in support of the Decade

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, in resolution 44/236, urged the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to accord priority, as appropriate and in a concerted manner, to natural disaster preparedness, prevention, relief and short-term recovery including economic damage and risk assessment in their operational activities. The Secretary-General was requested, in this regard, to ensure that adequate means are made available to the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator.

2. United Nations resident coordinators and the field representatives of the United Nations system were requested to work closely and in a coordinated manner with Governments to achieve the objective and goals of the Decade. The regional commissions of the United Nations were also urged to play an active role in implementing the activities of the Decade, as natural disasters often transcend national boundaries.

3. Scientific and technological unions, financial institutions, including banks and insurance companies, and industrial enterprises, foundations and other non-governmental organizations were encouraged to support and participate fully in the programmes and activities of the Decade prepared and implemented by the international community, including Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

II. INTER-AGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE

4. The Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) of the Steering Committee of the Decade, established by the Secretary-General in 1988 for coordination of the United Nations system's Decade-related activities, has served as information sharing and consultation mechanism for the agencies' action programmes. It should be noted that membership of the Steering Committee and the IAWG includes agencies with mandates in disaster reduction, such as WMO, UNESCO, UNIDO, ITU and others, and is thus different from the Inter-Agency Standing Committee established more recently for coordination of humanitarian assistance programmes.

5. Seven meetings of the Steering Committee and sixteen meetings of the IAWG have been held since the establishment of the Committee, including four meetings of the IAWG in 1993 and 1994 in preparation for the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction. In addition to the traditional participation of the agencies of the United Nations system, a number of non-governmental and scientific organizations such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO), have joined in the meetings of the IAWG, and assumed substantial responsibility in organizing the scientific and technical programme of the World Conference.

6. The contribution of the Steering Committee and IAWG to the Decade and to the Conference is well illustrated in the following summary reports of their Decade-related activities. Reports from other actively contributing Decade partners are also included in this addendum.

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat

7. The activities of the Department are reported upon in the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations (A/48/177-E/1994/80). A further report on the activities of the Department in disaster mitigation is contained in the report of the Secretary-General of the Conference (A/CONF/172/4 and Add.1 and 2).

B. Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the Secretariat

8. In the field of statistics, the Department, in collaboration with the World Bank, the IMF, OECD and Eurostat, will shortly be issuing the System of National Accounts 1993 (SNA). This publication represents a major advance in national accounting, with one of the many new elements dealing specifically with changes in the values of assets, liabilities and net worth as a result of destruction, by war or other political events, or by natural catastrophes. Another section of the SNA, reporting on catastrophic losses, identified such events as major earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves, exceptionally severe hurricanes,

drought and other natural disasters, acts of war, riots and other demonstrations due to political events, and technological accidents, such as major toxic spills or release of radioactive particles into the air. Included here are such major losses as deterioration in the quality of land caused by abnormal flooding or wind damage, destruction of cultivated assets by drought or outbreaks of disease, destruction of buildings, equipment or valuables in forest fires or earthquakes, and the accidental destruction of currency or bearer securities as a result of natural catastrophe or political events.

9. The economic and environmental impact of natural disasters within the SNA framework has been further elaborated in another study recently published by the Department, entitled "Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting".

C. United Nations Children's Fund

10. Throughout the 1990s UNICEF has been increasingly involved in emergencies. During the past few years, in addition to its involvement in a number of high-profile complex emergencies such as Somalia and the former Yugoslavia, UNICEF has also provided emergency assistance to countries affected by natural disasters and health emergencies. These events have included floods in Ecuador, Lebanon, Pakistan and Paraguay; earthquakes in India, Egypt, Indonesia, Pakistan and Turkey; an outbreak of cerebrospinal meningitis in Cameroon; cholera in Mozambique, Peru and El Salvador, and volcanic eruptions in the Philippines and also Nicaragua, where the damage was compounded by a tidal wave or tsunami. Persistent drought affected some 13 countries in Africa, putting around 22 million people, mainly children and women, at risk of starvation and disease.

11. In the context of natural disasters, the main responsibility of UNICEF is to reduce the vulnerability of children and women, and of the families and communities that they depend on. UNICEF also has a responsibility to ensure an awareness of the potential impact of disasters, and the possibility of mitigating the effects through the adoption of disaster prevention and preparedness measures, essential if vulnerability to future disasters is to be reduced. All UNICEF development programmes should incorporate disaster measures so that those children and women most at risk can be specially targeted.

12. Given the interrelationship between emergency and development programmes, policy regarding natural disasters is an integral part of UNICEF programmes in general - aiming to enhance both child survival and development. Recognizing that children are the most vulnerable group in times of disaster, it is necessary to ensure that the goals of the 1990 World Summit for Children are incorporated into all emergency programme plans.

13. As part of its policy for promoting objectives of the Decade in mitigating disasters, UNICEF activities through government counterparts, NGOs and other partners aim at enhancing the following issues: awareness of hazards, vulnerability and risk, the capacity to cope, and disaster response.

14. UNICEF has been actively promoting the ideals and objectives of the Decade by encouraging its field offices to support national government initiatives and awareness campaigns. At the World Conference, UNICEF participated in the

organization of the session on "Vulnerable communities" by presenting two case-studies on Bangladesh and South Africa.

D. United Nations Development Programme

15. UNDP has chaired the working group on "Relief to development continuum" established by the Steering Committee.

16. Through its network of field offices, and with headquarters support, UNDP has been heavily involved in reconstruction and rehabilitation work in countries affected by both natural disasters and complex emergencies. Recovery projects aimed at addressing problems of drought, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions or typhoons have been successfully implemented.

17. Effective from 1 June 1993, UNDP has issued new financial, administrative and personnel procedures in natural disaster and emergency-related activities. These improved guidelines will facilitate the Resident Coordinators'/Resident Representatives' access to financial support for his coordination activities and provide funds speedily to dispense cash grants which provide the flexibility to meet critical gaps very early in the relief phase following a natural disaster. The Administrator has formed a group of eminent consultants to prepare a study on UNDP's role in the relief to development continuum.

18. The Disaster Management Training Programme, co-managed by UNDP and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), is a national and international disaster mitigation and capacity-building mechanism. This programme, with the assistance of professional disaster management institutions, has developed sophisticated and well-structured training modules that cover the major categories and phases of natural disasters and complex emergencies. Since its inception in 1991, trainers from UNDP, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and United Nations organizations have had their skills upgraded and six regional cooperating institutions now implement training programmes as executing agencies. Workshops have been attended by participants from national governments, non-governmental organizations, United Nations organizations, regional institutions and bilateral donors. Follow-up projects, with support from UNDP's Special Programme Resources, are being implemented.

19. The first phase of the Training Programme is coming to an end in mid-1994. A mid-term review and an internal evaluation has been completed. UNDP and DHA staff, together with a team of international experts, is currently preparing the second phase of the programme. Over the past year, UNDP and DHA have broadened their DMTP partnership and included UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, WHO and FAO in the design and formulation of the next phase of the programme.

United Nations Volunteers

20. In the last decade, UNV specialists have served extensively with United Nations agencies in the provision of humanitarian assistance. Almost 1,000 United Nations specialists have worked in the areas of emergency relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation and disaster preparedness.

21. Concerning natural disaster preparedness and mitigation, UNV is exploring the scope for joint programmes with regional, subregional and national disaster management centres, as well as support to National Committees established for the IDNDR, in collaboration with UNDP and DHA.

22. UNV specialists in various aspects of disaster preparedness and mitigation have worked over the years to support institutions developing and implementing data-gathering and analysis programmes, e.g. epidemiological surveys, in early warning systems, or introducing new methods of construction for low-cost earthquake-resistant homes in Yemen, or storm-resistant housing in the Cook Islands, etc.

23. Working out of such institutions, UNV specialists help direct attention to the needs for low-cost disaster prevention/mitigation measures at municipal and community levels in disaster-prone countries, using appropriate technologies, and focusing on the most vulnerable low-income communities.

24. Similarly, UNV specialists and UNV field workers work to strengthen the technical and managerial capacity of local NGOs and community-based organizations in many countries. Under UNV's Participatory Development Programme for strengthening community-based organizations, UNV specialists are active in a number of African and Asian countries, facilitating subregional exchange of experience between experienced grass-roots volunteer development workers.

25. Increasingly, volunteers could generate data on disaster preparedness at country and municipal levels for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, and at the same or a subsequent stage, support the percolation of disaster management training to subnational level and community level.

E. United Nations Population Fund

26. UNFPA is currently finalizing a policy guideline that will set out the areas for UNFPA assistance in emergency and continuing relief situations. The main focus will be the family planning and reproductive health needs of women and adolescents.

27. In spite of the absence of policies, in the past, UNFPA has nevertheless responded in a number of cases to urgent requests of such assistance made in instances of major natural disasters. For instance, UNFPA has provided assistance for reconstruction in the aftermath of the typhoon which affected the two provinces of Anhui and Fujin in China in 1991, and after the earthquake in Maharashtra, India, in September 1993.

28. UNFPA has not directly been involved in disaster management capacity-building. However, UNFPA participated in such activities when they were organized under the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), but has not been directly involved either with the organizational, or with the financial arrangements in support of the Decade.

F. United Nations Environment Programme

Centre for Urgent Environmental Assistance

29. The Centre for Urgent Environmental Assistance was established for an experimental phase of 18 months and was reviewed and extended by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1993. Its primary objective is to complement, harmonize and strengthen the international response capacity to environmental emergencies.

30. One of the most important products of the Centre's work during the experimental period has been the preparation of a draft framework for a United Nations environmental emergency plan, as an aid in identifying precise roles and responsibilities, so as to ensure rapid and effective response in time of emergency. A provisional network of national focal points has also been established, representing all global regions and serving as a base on which to build the international response capacity to environmental emergencies.

31. The evolution of the Centre as integrated into the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in the United Nations system for information on and for the coordination of environmental emergencies is being finalized. For the World Conference, the Centre organized the Technical Committee session on Interrelationships between Technological and Natural Hazards.

G. United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

32. In order to enhance the capacity of professionals and Governments to integrate disaster mitigation considerations into their human settlements planning, development and management efforts, and to ensure that post-disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation activities are development oriented, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has not only kept up the pace but even extended its assistance and activities in those areas.

33. In collaboration with the World Bank and UNDP, Habitat is developing an interregional project on the reduction of vulnerability to natural or technological disasters in metropolitan areas. That project is one of the recognized international demonstration projects for the Decade. The four selected metropolitan areas for the initial case-studies are located in Brazil, the Philippines and Turkey. Due to the interest also expressed by other Governments, additional funding is being sought to expand the project.

34. In the area of seismic disasters, Habitat has been particularly active in providing technical assistance for reconstruction: Panama, Costa Rica, Iran, Nepal, the Philippines and Jamaica. In Algeria, Habitat is assisting the National Centre for Applied Research in earthquake engineering to strengthen national technical capacity. A video film and a publication on mitigating the effects of earthquakes on human settlements have been prepared and distributed world wide.

35. In the area of flood mitigation, assistance has continued to be provided to Bangladesh and Pakistan. With regard to landslides, Habitat is assisting Sri Lanka with hazard analysis and mapping.

36. In the area of hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones, Montserrat is receiving assistance from Habitat for post-hurricane rehabilitation of housing, including longer-term institutional arrangements. As a follow-up to those efforts and at the request of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Habitat and UNDP have produced a film on hurricane-resistant construction, based on the Montserrat experience, supplemented by a construction manual used in training seminars.

37. Habitat is providing assistance to the areas of Belarus affected by the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. The main expected outcome is a revised comprehensive scheme for the territorial development of Belarus.

38. As part of its research and operational activities and as a contribution to the Decade, Habitat has produced a publication entitled Planning and Management for Disaster Reduction.

H. United Nations Centre for Regional Development

39. UNCRD has been undertaking regional development programmes related to disaster reduction even before IDNDR started. International Seminars on Regional Development Planning for Disaster Prevention were held from 1986 to 1989. The focal point of the seminars was vulnerability assessment of disasters caused by earthquakes, floods and volcanoes.

40. Efforts have been made to solve concrete issues by setting up clearer objectives since the Decade was initiated. These efforts are international research and training seminars such as: (1) The Socio-Economic Impacts of Disasters, 1990; (2) Information Flows in Disaster Management of Metropolitan Areas, 1991; and (3) Training and Education for Improving Earthquake Disaster Management in Developing Countries, 1992.

41. Collaborative research projects with particular countries and regions are continuously being conducted. These include: (a) a training programme on earthquake engineering and disaster management for establishing a building administration system in the Philippines, in collaboration with the United Nations, the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (Philippines), and the Government of the Philippines, 1991-1993; (b) seminars and workshops for development of modules for training on integrated approach to disaster management and regional/rural development planning in Bangladesh, in collaboration with the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CARTOP), 1990-1993; and (c) International Workshop on Regional Disaster Management in the Latin American Region, 1991. The "IDNDR Aichi/Nagoya International Conference" was held in 1993 and focused on disaster management in metropolitan areas for the twenty-first century. For the World Conference, UNCRD organized the Technical Committee session on Effects of Disasters in Modern Societies.

I. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

42. The Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on LDCs held in Paris in 1990, specifically addressed the question of disaster mitigation, preparedness and prevention in LDCs. Noting that natural disasters continue to cause heavy losses of human lives and property, with particularly severe and lasting impact on the national economies of LDCs, the Programme of Action emphasizes the need for adoption of measures by LDCs, with appropriate international support.

43. As the focal point for the review and follow-up of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action at the global level, the UNCTAD secretariat has included in its analytical work the question of natural disasters and their impact on social and economic performance in LDCs.

44. Following General Assembly resolution 47/212 B regarding the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, the programmes of the former United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations were integrated within the UNCTAD secretariat in 1993.

45. An important part of the work to be undertaken deals with the acquisition, transfer, absorption, diffusion and development of environmentally sound technologies. Availability of such technologies to all countries, and in particular to developing countries, would in addition enable them to undertake appropriate measures for the assessment, prediction, prevention and mitigation of natural disasters.

J. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

46. The support provided to the Decade is in the context of FAO's constitutional role in all matters related to food and agriculture, in particular, its mandate for the development, utilization and conservation of natural resources. Many, if not most, of FAO's technical capabilities and assistance activities are relevant to rational management of natural resources, and relate to natural disaster assessment, prevention, preparedness, mitigation, relief and rehabilitation.

47. The issues of drought and desertification have been high on FAO's agenda for many years and to these can be added other disasters directly related to the management of natural resources, such as floods and landslides. Establishing means to control plagues of grasshoppers and locusts also are clearly within FAO's mandate. Unfortunately, the Decade itself has not generated additional funding to the participating agencies.

48. FAO has participated actively in the preparation of the World Conference, developing the technical session on "drought management" in collaboration with WFP and IFAD. FAO also has been participating in the DHA/UNDP Disaster Management Training Programme since 1993 through contributing staff selected from such units or services as the Office of Special Relief Operations (OSRO) or the Global Information and Early Warning Service, as potential trainers of trainers.

49. On a global scale, FAO is contributing to increasing preparedness for natural disasters by operating the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS). The System's principal objectives are to continuously monitor food supply and demand conditions, identify countries or regions where food shortages are imminent, and assess possible emergency food requirements. The System is particularly useful in predicting the impacts of slow-onset disasters such as droughts, while enabling member countries and the international community to respond appropriately and speedily to other natural disasters as well. The World Meteorological Organization and the World Health Organization also contribute data.

50. For Africa and some adjacent countries, GIEWS uses extensively satellite-based data for monitoring crop growing conditions and to locate potential breeding habitats of desert locusts. FAO has established a unique space-based monitoring system, called ARTEMIS (Africa Real Time Environmental Monitoring Information System) to monitor weather conditions and vegetation cover in Africa, the Near East and southwest Asia. The onset of drought conditions, for example, can be detected at early stages. A number of users, including regional and national food security and early warning systems, receive ARTEMIS data on a regular basis. Such systems have been established with the assistance of FAO in about 40 countries. Another major application of ARTEMIS data is the detection of potential breeding locations of the desert locust.

51. With regard to disaster response, through the activities of OSRO, mentioned above, FAO is involved in the rehabilitation of disaster affected areas in providing seeds, agricultural tools and veterinary supplies and equipment. Upon requests of affected member nations, FAO provides advice on appropriate action and logistics, and solicits and coordinates donor support to them.

52. FAO pursues within its mandate on a regular basis and in a large number of field projects, activities that have a bearing on protecting lands against natural disasters or rehabilitating disaster hit areas.

K. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

53. UNESCO has actively participated in the Decade's Steering Committee and Inter-Agency Working Group. Two international demonstration projects - (a) Training Material for Disaster Reduction and (b) International Mobile Early-Warning System for Volcanic Eruptions - are carried out by UNESCO.

54. UNESCO is engaged in the assessment and mitigation of risk arising from natural hazards of geological origin (earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions and landslides), and contributes to the study of hazards of hydrometeorlogical origin (storms, floods, prolonged droughts, desertification and avalanches). The IDNDR presented UNESCO with the opportunity to focus and align its programme with the goals and objectives of the Decade.

55. The main activities undertaken include the establishment of international, regional and national centres, systems and networks for the exchange and analysis of earthquake data and training; the identification of seismically

active zones and the quantitative assessment of the earthquake hazard in those zones; and field studies of the effects of large earthquakes. National seismological observatory networks have also been created by UNESCO in a number of countries.

56. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO is the organization through which international cooperation in tsunami warning is made. Its International Tsunami Information Centre (ITIC), located in Honolulu, works closely with the Tsunami Warning System in the Pacific. IOC has produced training materials on protection against tsunamis, including pamphlets to schoolchildren.

57. Field studies of catastrophic floods are made by UNESCO scientific missions. Studies on droughts and desertification are also undertaken in the framework of IHP and the Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

58. UNESCO has helped member States to deal with the problems that sudden natural hazards present for school buildings. Emphasis is laid on practical advice for building schools that will be relatively safe if a natural disaster occurs.

59. UNESCO has participated in the operations undertaken to safeguard cultural heritage, monuments, sites and property against hazards.

60. In the aftermath of natural disasters, and at the request of member States affected, UNESCO has made post-disaster interventions aimed at investigating and introducing transitional actions to draw lessons from the event, to propose and sometimes execute measures for reducing the impacts of the disaster as well as losses from any future event, and for developing human resources as a catalyst for recovery and national self-reliance. The purpose is also to fill the gap between emergency relief operations and the long-term recovery and rehabilitation action.

61. UNESCO actively participated in the World Conference, assuming the overall responsibility of organizing the Scientific and Technical Poster session and co-organizing with WMO the Technical Committee on Warning Systems.

62. The Decade presents UNESCO with a unique opportunity to capitalize on the strength of its past and present activities in designing its future contribution to natural disaster reduction, so that continuity should be combined with change.

L. World Health Organization

63. The World Health Organization has been one of the Decade's strongest supporters because the Decade provides WHO with an additional opportunity to promote health sector preparedness capacities of member States. Since the Decade was launched, WHO has adopted a formal programme for the Decade in 1990. Extensive regional programmes have been adopted and implemented by WHO Regional Offices, particularly its Regional Office for the Americas, where activities

have gone far beyond preparedness to encompass disaster mitigation for hospitals and water and sanitation facilities.

64. Regarding preparations for the World Conference, WHO helped organize main committee sessions. WHO headquarters organized a session on the topic "From disaster management to sustainable development: how the public sector, private sector and voluntary organizations can work together". WHO's Regional Office for the Americas organized two sessions on regional reports. WHO and its regional offices vigorously promoted the conference to health ministries the world over. Building up to the World Conference, WHO's Regional Office for the Americas held regional meetings of IDNDR National Committees in Guatemala for Latin America (1991) and in Jamaica for the Caribbean (1992), sponsored 30 participants from the region to attend the Inter-American Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (Colombia, 1994), and prepared a comprehensive report on the evolution of disaster management in the region. WHO's Pan-African Centre for Emergency Preparedness and Responses in Addis Ababa organized several meetings in Africa with experts and intergovernmental officials to shape a common African position on emergencies in preparation for the World Conference.

65. In addition, a WHO staff member was seconded to the Decade secretariat on a part-time basis to contribute to public information preparations for the World Conference. Administrative and logistical support was provided by WHO's Regional Office for the Americas to the secretariat subregional officer for Latin America and the Caribbean.

66. WHO is committed to the Decade as it provides a framework for international cooperation to help countries build self-reliance in the face of disasters. It provides a forum to overcome the narrow sectoralism that has often been the hallmark of disaster preparedness and response. It could become a framework to truly coordinate the parallel efforts of disaster preparedness that are under way in countries. It could help define priorities in research and publications, and be a framework for agencies to cooperate in producing them.

M. World Meteorological Organization

67. WMO was involved in the preparatory phase of the Decade from the very outset. In 1990 the WMO Executive Council endorsed a WMO Plan of Action for the IDNDR, which was formally adopted by the WMO Congress one year later.

68. The activities being implemented under this Plan relate to all natural disasters of meteorological and hydrological origin, these accounting for the major part of all injuries, lives lost and property damage from natural disasters. Most of the long-term activities of WMO, in particular under its World Weather Watch and Hydrology and Water Resources Programmes, are geared to aims which are indistinguishable from those of the Decade.

69. These activities include the operation of a global system for the collection, transmission and analysis of meteorological data, as a basis for national Meteorological Services to forecast severe weather conditions well in advance of their becoming a threat to populated areas. Support is also given to efforts by national Hydrological Services in the forecasting of major floods and

droughts. In both cases the data collected can be used to assess the future risk of such events occurring in critical locations. A continuing programme of research and development aims to improve the accuracy and precision of these forecasts and assessments. However, the technology that is already available is capable of making drastic reductions in the toll of life, injury and property damage from the events concerned, it only needs wider application. This requires the installation and maintenance of equipment and the training both of staff and of those who receive and interpret the assessments and forecasts provided.

70. In line with this philosophy, WMO has been implementing three of the Decade's International Demonstration Projects, namely those on "Tropical cyclone warning system for the South-West Indian Ocean region", "System for technology exchange for natural disasters" and "Comprehensive risk assessment". All three projects are based on the transfer and use of tried and tested existing technology. They are being supported by the European Community Development Fund, Japan and Switzerland but, in the case of the latter two projects, their implementation is hampered by a lack of financial resources.

71. In addition to these technical activities, WMO has been pleased to participate in all the various planning meetings for the Decade and has, on more than one occasion, seconded staff to assist in the work of the Decade secretariat. For the World Conference WMO co-organized, together with UNESCO, the Technical Committee session on Warning Systems.

N. World Food Programme

72. The World Food Programme continues to strengthen disaster mitigation aspects of its work, in line with the objectives of the Decade. Much of the development work of WFP over the years has been designed to lessen the impact of emergencies on people in areas prone to natural disasters such as drought and flood, and this has been given a renewed focus in countries where government partners have put a priority on preparedness and prevention.

73. A new project to incorporate vulnerability analysis more closely in WFP programming and targeting of assistance has been set up, and is to be extended to several country programmes in sub-Saharan Africa. Through this means, WFP will give particular attention to household strategies, which are the vulnerable populations' own "prevention" measures, in its assessment of emergency situations and drawing up of appropriate response with recipient countries and NGO partners. Vulnerability analysis and mapping will be done in close collaboration with, and as a complement to, ongoing programmes.

74. Because of WFP's heavy involvement in disaster relief (2.5 million MT of emergency food aid in 1993), the Programme actively promotes the establishment of disaster preparedness structures and early warning systems in all countries prone to recurrent natural disasters. This concerns particularly countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, where drought is the most damaging phenomenon, and in Asia, where floods and typhoons are the major natural disasters to contend with.

75. The majority of emergency food aid currently channelled through WFP is used in "complex" emergencies, in which the adverse effects of natural disasters such as drought are compounded by civil strife. While WFP does not directly fund preparedness structures, the Programme supports them on a wide scale, sometimes with personnel. WFP continues to promote the establishment and strengthening of coordinating bodies, such as the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission in Ethiopia, and a Food Aid Coordinating Unit in Malawi.

O. Economic Commission for Africa

76. Prior to 1993, the contribution of the Economic Commission for Africa to the activities of the IDNDR was indirect. This was effected principally through the provision of technical support to initiatives of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) and by the articulation of Africa's concerns in the preparation for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. As part of its contribution to the definition and elaboration of Africa's strategy and programme for the implementation of Agenda 21, the Commission, directly and through its subsidiary cooperating institutions, has provided the intellectual justification for linking natural disaster reduction to the quest for sustainable development in Africa.

77. ECA collaborated very closely and substantively with the IDNDR secretariat in the drafting of the mid-term report for Africa and its annexed country natural disaster profile on the Decade. As the empirical and theoretical basis for the African Common Position, both documents were approved by the African Council of Ministers responsible for Social and Economic Development and Planning in May 1994, as Africa's documents for the Yokohama Conference, by resolution 773 (XXIX). Collaboration between ECA, OAU and the Decade secretariat is expected to continue, actively, in the various subregional workshops planned in Africa for the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy. The above-mentioned resolution requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to report on the implementation of the Decade at its next annual session.

P. Economic Commission for Europe

78. As part of the work programme of the Timber Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and in order to provide countries with the latest information on forest fire damage, prevention and control, the secretariat of the Timber Committee collects and publishes, annually, statistics on the number, area, causes, value of losses and other aspects of forest fires. It also publishes, biannually, the International Forest Fire News, which is intended to enhance the exchange of information on wildland fire management and sciences. The ECE Timber Committee has also participated actively in the follow-up work to resolution 3, on a decentralized European data bank on forest fires, adopted by the Ministerial Conference on the Production of Forests in Europe, held in December 1990. A seminar on forest fire prevention, land use and population was held in Greece in October and November 1991.

79. The ECE Timber Committee promotes the rapid international dissemination of reliable information on sudden and severe damage to forests in the ECE region, notably that caused by fire, wind, snow, and insect infestation, so as to reduce disruption of wood markets. The Committee also examines the implications of air pollution and other damage to forests for wood supply and markets by keeping under review possible consequences of damage to forests, and decides on action as necessary.

Q. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

80. ECLAC does not undertake activities of direct concern to the Decade as part of its regular programme of work. However, during a recent regional conference (Cartagena, 20 to 27 April 1994) the member States adopted a resolution whereby they entrust the ECLAC secretariat with some responsibilities directly related to the Decade. It recommends that the ECLAC secretariat should undertake the systematic and quantitative research and analysis required for determining, in the shortest possible time the overall economic effects of disasters on all the countries of the region, as well as the possibility of reducing them through prevention and mitigation works and actions, and submit to the Governments of the region specific proposals for including disaster prevention and mitigation policies in national development plans, as part of the efforts relating to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. The meeting also recommends that the ECLAC secretariat should negotiate and obtain additional extrabudgetary resources in order to carry out these tasks.

R. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

81. ESCAP continues to be involved in promoting and enhancing cooperative efforts in the Asian and Pacific region to mitigate damage from typhoons/cyclones, floods, droughts and geologic disaster. The Natural Resources Division has been working to help the countries of the region to mitigate the effects of water-related disasters since the late 1940s, when it was known as the Bureau of Flood Control of ESCAFE (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Far East).

82. The Decade provided a fresh impetus to ESCAP and to its members and associate members for strengthening the efforts to reduce the increasingly serious disruptions and human and material losses caused by natural phenomena. At its forty-fifth session in 1989, the Commission adopted resolution 45/5 calling for the promotion and support of such cooperative efforts by the ESCAP secretariat, the affiliated Governments and concerned international organizations.

83. The Manual and Guidelines for Comprehensive Flood Loss Prevention and Management was published in 1991. This publication has been translated into Chinese and Korean by the respective Governments for wider dissemination. Since 1991 advisory missions on the application of the Manual and Guidelines have been fielded to China, Hong Kong, Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Solomon Islands, Thailand and Viet Nam. An advisory

mission went to Viet Nam to provide advice on developing emergency preparedness and disaster management measures. Another mission provided advisory services to Vanuatu on flood protection and river management. In March 1994, an advisory mission was undertaken to Myanmar on water-related natural disaster reduction.

84. The secretariat has also continued to give substantive support to the ESCAP/WHO Typhoon Committee and the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones. Continuing cooperation and coordination has been maintained with the IDNDR secretariat.

85. In June 1993, ESCAP took part in the international Forum on Natural Hazards Mapping, hosted by the Geological Survey of Japan at Tsukuba, Japan, in which 16 countries participated. At this meeting, it was agreed to establish a project for a geohazards map of eastern Asia, under the auspices of ESCAP, and a cost-sharing arrangement between Japan and other donor agencies. The ultimate aim is the production of user-oriented large-scale maps that will show the various types of hazard- and risk-zones.

86. The ESCAP secretariat, through its UNDP-funded Regional Remote Sensing Programme (RRSP), has initiated a number of activities related to disaster monitoring and assessment in the region in recent years.

87. ESCAP has traditionally been involved in natural disaster reduction, and the Decade has provided a fresh impetus for work on mitigation of natural disasters. In line with the goals of the Decade, workshops, seminars, advisory missions have been organized on various aspects of natural disaster including preparation of guidelines and thematic maps. Work has been focused on water-related and geologic hazard reduction activities also involving application of space techniques in disaster warning and mitigation. Flood loss reduction in urban and rural areas has been given high priority in ESCAP's work. Project activities have also been undertaken on drought early warning and crop monitoring.

IV. ACTIVITIES OF OTHER DECADE PARTNERS

A. International Civil Defence Organization

88. The ICDO is an intergovernmental organization of 42 member States as of April 1994, with the objective of the promotion of civil protection world wide.

89. Taking into account the recommendations of the International Framework of Action, the organization, thanks to its direct relations with civil defence authorities in each member State, has intensified its action in the following domains:

(a) Information (ICDO Documentation Centre - International Civil Defence Journal in Arabic, English, French and Spanish);

(b) Training (ICDO International Training Courses - Geneva and Regional Centres);

(c) Technical assistance when requested (assistance programmes);

(d) Education and awareness of the public.

90. Implementation of the DHA mandate with regard to the coordination of all emergency actions, thus permitting the ICDO to play a full effective role within the International Decade.

B. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

91. Reducing the effects of disasters, be they triggered by natural or man-made events, is a central part of the work of the Federation. It is explicitly referred to in two of the four goals of the Federation's Strategic Work Plan for the 90s. Natural disaster reduction is achieved through a variety of programmes, from community-based preparedness projects to international advocacy actions. This report describes some of the key approaches and achievements of the Federation.

92. The Federation's global disaster preparedness programme operates at three different levels: at the local grass-roots level, supporting the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; at the Federation level, improving readiness and effectiveness for international disaster response; and with the international world outside of the Federation, lobbying for policies, approaches and funding directions which best serve the interests of the world's most disaster vulnerable people. In 1994 the Federation appealed for over Sw F 12 million to support National Society Preparedness activities around the globe.

93. The Library and Information Services Network project aims to develop standards for recording and organizing information and therefore facilitating its accessibility. The LISN project serves as a gateway to a variety of electronic sources of information, both inside and outside the Federation, and is a prime tool for building better preparedness.

94. In 1993 the Federation launched the World Disasters Report. The World Disasters Report is the only annual global report focusing on disasters, from earthquakes to epidemics, conflict to economic crisis, and the millions of people affected by them.

95. An informal consultation on the health aspects of the Decade was convened in November 1990 by the Health Department of the Federation. The outcome of the consultation set out a series of recommendations covering the development of First Aid, the development of training material, the strengthening of local health resources, and the building of better health information networks. In 1994, the Federation is seeking to spend some Sw F 24.6 million on health programmes world wide, most of which have disaster reduction as an integral part of their objectives.

C. International Telecommunication Union

96. ITU co-organized the Tampere (Finland) Conference on Disaster Communications, the major outcome of which was the Tampere Declaration. The main thrust of this Declaration was to undertake work towards the realization of a Convention on Disaster Communications. It was agreed that DHA would take the lead in initiating action to convene the parties that will discuss and put into being this Convention. ITU is prepared to assist in this process.

97. ITU has made a proposal for the stocking of a certain quantity of telecommunications equipment for emergency use. The Union has been seeking financing for such equipment. This proposal includes the possible provision of technical expertise by ITU.

98. The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, 21-29 March 1994) adopted a resolution on disaster communications which, inter alia, instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau of the ITU to help, within the framework of the Decade, those developing countries which are particularly prone to natural disasters, in the development of early-warning systems, using telecommunications (including broadcasting services) through the Special Voluntary Programme for technical cooperation, and requests the Secretary-General of the ITU to work closely with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat with a view to increasing the Union's involvement in disaster communication.

D. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

99. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD is a forum for its Members to coordinate their aid policies and to consult on the broader aspects of development policy, encompassing not only financial, economic, trade and structural issues, but also environmental aspects. A main concern of the DAC, through its Working Party on Development Assistance and Environment established in 1989, is the integration of environmental aspects into development assistance projects and programmes. To ensure that environmental considerations are effectively taken into account, the DAC has, inter alia, adopted a number of Guidelines on Aid and Environment, the most recent one being the DAC Guidelines on Disaster Mitigation (April 1994). They are intended to increase awareness among policy makers and task managers involved in development cooperation of the threats posed by natural hazards and of the range of measures that may be adopted so as to reduce the impacts of natural disasters on developing countries. DAC members have an important role to play in assisting developing countries to enhance their capacity to cope with natural hazards, as they possess considerable knowledge and experience in the field and can provide financial resources through their aid programmes, to promote the adoption of measures to mitigate the effect of disasters by both the public and private sectors in the recipient countries. The DAC Guidelines on Disaster Mitigation have been elaborated with the assistance of experts from member Governments, international organizations (including the Decade secretariat), universities and NGOs.

E. Organization of African Unity

100. The secretariat of the Organization of African Unity has performed a major role in sensitizing African Governments about the importance of natural disaster reduction since the start of the Decade. In pursuit of this objective, OAU organized a workshop of its member States on natural disasters in April 1992, which provided an important forum for addressing policy and practical issues of the Decade relevant to the continent. In November 1993, the OAU secretariat - in collaboration with ECA, the secretariat of the Decade and WHO - hosted a meeting for African experts to review the status of implementation of the objectives of the Decade. These deliberations led to the drafting of a document entitled the "African Common Position on IDNDR and the World Conference", which was endorsed, ad referendum, in January 1994 by the fifty-ninth session of the Council of Ministers of OAU.

101. The OAU secretariat continued its close cooperation with the Decade secretariat in the preparations leading to, and during, the Yokohama Conference. By its recent resolution at the 60th Meeting of its Council of Ministers, in Tunisia in June 1994, OAU endorsed the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World. The OAU secretariat is required, by the same resolution, to cooperate with the Decade secretariat and ECA in organizing appropriate workshops to help African States implement the above strategy and report to the Council of Ministers in June 1995.

F. Association of South-East Asian Nations

102. ASEAN regional collaboration in matters connected with natural disasters comes under the purview of the ASEAN Experts Group on Disaster Management (previously known as the ASEAN Experts Group on Natural Disasters) whose mission is "to enhance regional cooperation in all aspects of disaster management, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, through more effective mutual assistance activities, in order to minimize the adverse consequences of disasters on economic and social development in member countries". The Expert Group meets once every two years and has had eight meetings since its establishment in 1975. The Decade was discussed at two previous meetings of the Experts Group. At its 8th meeting held at Langkawi from 9 to 11 August 1993, the Experts Group agreed that each ASEAN member country would commemorate IDNDR Day on the second Wednesday of October each year and to issue a joint statement on IDNDR Day in 1994 (13 October 1994) through the Chairman of the Experts Group.

G. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation secretariat

103. Heads of State or Governments at the third SAARC Summit at Kathmandu (November 1987) expressed deep concern at the fast and continuing degradation of the environment and suffering caused by natural disasters. They decided to intensify regional cooperation and to commission a study on the causes and consequences of natural disasters and the protection and preservation of the environment. At the Fourth SAARC Summit at Islamabad (December 1988), the Heads

of State or Governments decided that a joint study be undertaken on the Greenhouse Effect and its Impact on the Region.

104. The recommendations of the above regional studies were considered by the Technical Committee on Environment, during its first meeting, and measures were identified from among the recommendations, for immediate action, and decisions were made on a number of modalities for their implementation by member States. The modalities decided upon include improving climate monitoring capability through networking arrangement and through SAARC Meteorological Research Centre (SMRC); developing climate change and sealevel rise scenarios through country-specific studies, and the sharing of information data in this respect; making available to member States expertise on climate research and monitoring greenhouse gas emissions; identification of training and research institutions and ongoing programmes; exchange of information and data; exchange of experience on strategies for responses to climate change.

105. The SAARC Council of Ministers at its Thirteenth Session in Dhaka (4-5 December 1993) welcomed the offer by the Government of India to host a Workshop in order to formulate a collective position by SAARC countries on the issues to be discussed at the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in Japan in May 1994. Pursuant to the above decisions, the Government of India hosted the Workshop in New Delhi on 30 March-2 April 1994 which was attended by experts from all member States and the concerned Director of the SAARC secretariat. The report of the Workshop and the collective position were utilized by the delegations of the member States at the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction.

H. Volunteers in Technical Assistance

106. Since early 1991, Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA) has managed a cooperative agreement, supported by the United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, to develop innovative disaster reduction initiatives in cooperation with multinational and local private sector corporations. VITA has implemented programmes directly related to the objectives of the IDNDR.

107. Disaster preparedness training and advocacy training in the VITA programme facilitated the provision of United States expertise for disaster preparedness planning and specialized training in the following countries: Grenada, Colombia, Thailand, Philippines, India. The programme has also supported the development of disaster preparedness committees among Chambers of Commerce in Brazil, Ecuador and the Philippines. In addition, the programme has supported a very successful Caribbean Private Sector Disaster Coordinating Committee comprised of regional government, private, and voluntary agency membership. VITA also supported a feasibility study to promote a public education/community outreach programme for disaster preparedness in the vulnerable delta areas of Bangladesh. At the request of the Decade secretariat, VITA has organized a private sector group to support the Decade's World Conference in Yokohama in May 1994 to promote the private sector disaster preparedness, mitigation and prevention agenda during the Conference.

108. For the remainder of the Decade, VITA recommends that the United Nations system, including the Decade secretariat, take the following actions: encourage private sector, Government and NGO collaboration at the local level; support the use of appropriate information and telecommunications technology in disaster prone countries; and encourage the donor community to support disaster reduction programmes.

109. Concerning organizational arrangements during the Decade, with appropriate support from bilateral, multilateral and private sector donors, VITA could assist the United Nations system in adapting its low-cost ground and satellite technology for early warning, preparedness and response programmes in disaster prone countries.

V. ACTIVITIES OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ASSOCIATIONS

110. In 1990 the General Committee of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), set up a Special Committee for the Decade to provide advice to the members of ICSU on the harmonization and coordination of their efforts to reduce the human impacts of natural disasters and to organize a vigorous and effective ICSU contribution to the Decade. Since then the Special Committee has formulated integrated policies for the Decade at three meetings, held in January 1992 (Paris), August 1992 (Pasadena) and February 1993 (Moscow). Under those policies, education and training activities, as well as six Decade-related projects on tropical cyclone, volcano and earthquake hazards, famine, megacity protection and Lake Nyos-type hazards have been implemented by ICSU and its members, or jointly with United Nations organizations. All projects are making good progress and four have also been endorsed as demonstration projects by the Scientific and Technical Committee.

111. In 1992, the International Association for Earthquake Engineering founded the World Seismic Safety Initiative, a long-term international cooperative scheme that will advance and spread earthquake engineering knowledge world wide. That initiative was endorsed by delegates to the tenth World Conference on Earthquake Engineering, held at Madrid in July 1992, and by the Scientific and Technical Committee in 1993 as an international project for the Decade. A first workshop on seismic risk management for countries of the Asia and Pacific region was held at Bangkok and was attended by 30 participants from 19 countries. For the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, ICSU organized the Technical Committee on Hazard Resistance Structures, with contributions from the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO) and of the Union of International Technical Associations (UITA).